

(Washington, D.C) -- U.S. Representative Chet Edwards was in Waco today to announce that 270 jobs will be saved for employees who work on upgrades to the U.S. Navy's EP3-E surveillance plane at L-3 Communications, Waco's largest employer.

Congressman Edwards said, *"I believe we have a moral obligation to do everything within our power to protect our troops who protect us everyday. That is why I am honored to be able to announce that the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), Admiral Roughead, has committed an additional \$8 million to continue L-3 Waco's work in upgrading the intelligence capabilities of our EP3 airplanes. This is good news for the several hundred L-3 employees who depend on these jobs to support their families, and even better news for our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan whose lives will be saved as a result of their work."*

"The EP-3 surveillance plane is a workhorse that provides vital intelligence that has saved the lives of our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan and helped them carry out their mission of tracking down terrorists who would do our nation harm. You cannot put a dollar value on that," **Edwards concluded.**

It has been reported in recent weeks that the Administration's 2011 budget eliminated funding for the EP-3E program upgrades threatening the jobs of 270 L-3 employees who install state of the art technology on the surveillance planes. Upon learning of the problem, Edwards, who chairs the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee, met with Navy officials including Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Admiral Gary Roughead to stress the importance of the EP-3 program to the nation's defense, L-3, and the Central Texas economy.

Edwards was recently informed by the Navy that they had agreed to transfer \$8 million in their budget to continue the important work on the EP3-E program at L-3 Waco. Edwards also secured \$5 million for the program last year in the 2010 Defense Appropriations bill. EP-3E surveillance planes are heavily engaged collecting intelligence in missions in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere.

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